MEMOIR

OF

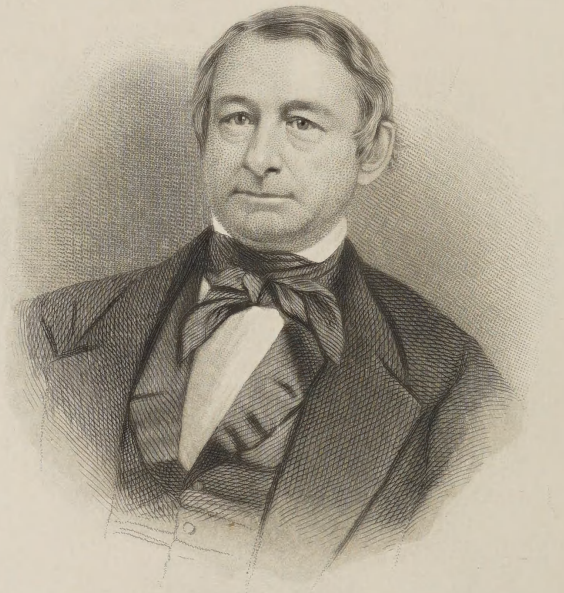
DANIEL P. KING.

Apr. 19. 1869

E
U67
1869

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2021 with funding from
Phillips Library at The Peabody Essex Museum

https://archive.org/details/memoirofhondanie00upha



Daniel P. King

MEMOIR

OF

HON. DANIEL P. KING,

BY

CHARLES W. UPHAM.

READ AT A MEETING OF THE ESSEX INSTITUTE, HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 19, 1869.

SALEM, MASS.
ESSEX INSTITUTE PRESS.
1869.

CARD
CATALOGUED.

E
U67
1869

MEMOIR.

Daniel Putnam King was born in Danvers, Mass., January 8th, 1801. His parents, Daniel and Phœbe (Upton) King, were of families long settled in that town and the vicinity. Originally its territory, as well as portions of the surrounding towns, was included in the limits of Salem. This territory is remarkable for the superior character of its first proprietors. Mostly agriculturists, they were of uncommon intellectual development, individuality of personal traits, independence of thought, and energy of spirit. Their descendants remain in large numbers, on the same area to-day. Perhaps it would be safe to say that in no district of our country have old families been so numerously preserved. Very many now occupy lands which their first American ancestors cleared.

Kings, Uptons and Putnams, are still in the same localities where the names appeared at the beginning. The subject of this memoir, in tracing his descent, and following the connections by intermarriage of his ancestors, will be found to have been allied not only to the names just mentioned, but with Townes, Nurses, Jacobses, Flints and many others who have dwelt in that region from the first planting of the country. The blood

of most of them flowed in his veins. So it is with almost the whole population of the neighborhood. The fibres of lineage and transmitted traits, associations, reminiscences and traditions bind them together as one people, and weld them into a homogeneous community. He may, therefore, be considered a specimen of the sort of manhood reared under the influences which have all along been operating on this same spot upon the generations that have occupied it. As a representative person he was in its strictest sense and full import, "to the manor born."

His family had maintained a respectable position, from the first, in the class of farmers, but was raised to a condition of affluence by the extraordinary spirit and force of character of one of its female heads. The grandmother of Daniel P. King opened a small shop or store in the farm-house, which was close to a public road, affording needful supplies to, and making purchases from, passing teams and the country people in the vicinity. Instances were, by the way, not uncommon, from an early period in this part of the country, for matrons of the most respectable families to conduct a business of this kind. Little shops were opened for the purpose in the front rooms of houses. There were many such in Salem, and they contributed largely to the thrift and prosperity of particular families. They had not often, however, been carried on to the extent, or on such a scale, as by Mrs. King. Leaving the affairs of the farm to her husband she took the entire charge of the store and the business connected with it, made her own purchases from the original importers, sold directly to exporters, and was recognized as a merchant in full standing. Elderly people in Salem have often described to me the appear-

ance of this woman, as she came into town in the prosecution of her business, and related instances of her intelligence, judgment, acumen and decision. When a vessel arrived from a foreign port, she was one of the first at the counting-room or wharf of its owner, and ready to purchase, in large quantities of its invoice. She understood thoroughly the laws of trade, and no one excelled her in promptitude, sagacity, or success. She soon laid the foundations of an extensive and prosperous business. Besides miscellaneous trading she carried on the manufacture of vinegar on a great scale, buying cider for the purpose from farmers' carts on the way to market, and from all the country round to the remote interior. The result was that her family was raised to a degree of wealth far above what could have been derived from agriculture alone. It was appropriated mainly, however, in the direction of agriculture, by enlarging the area of the homestead estate, and the purchase of additional lands, either under tillage, or what has been found highly lucrative, wood-lots. The business established by this energetic and remarkable woman, continued to be carried on by her son Daniel, who is remembered for his hospitable manners, cheerful temperament, and decision of character. He was respected and esteemed by his neighbors for his personal worth, and liberal and enlightened views in matters of trade, politics and religion. His wife was noticeable for great excellence and strength of character, firm and enlightened christian faith, and decided principles. She was devoted to every domestic duty, and conscientious, just, and benignant in all the relations of life and society, exhibiting uniformly gentle and amiable affections. Her constitutional temperament, and habitual aspect were delicate and refined, and her memory

is cherished with grateful tenderness by her descendants and connections. Her son inherited her marked and prominent traits. His education, commencing in the district school, was continued at Saco in Maine, and at Phillips Academy in Andover, where his preparation for college was completed. He took his degrees at Harvard University, graduating in the class of 1823. It is to be observed, as illustrating the peculiarity of his character and history, that he neither obtained nor sought eminent distinction as a scholar. In general, it may be said, in explanation of this fact, that he belonged to a description of persons, not a few in number, to whom the system of rivalry and emulation, so unfortunately prevalent in academic institutions, is distasteful and repulsive. Some minds do not mature so early as others, and long feel the injurious effects of the stamp of inferiority thus hastily impressed upon the estimate formed by others, and sometimes, as a consequence, by themselves. An ambition in no sense worthy to be cherished, an audacious or pretentious spirit, and freedom from the restraints and impediments experienced by modest, sensitive, and anxious temperaments, give preëminence to some, whom the tests of subsequent experience prove to be unworthy of it. Those, thus distanced in the first stages of academic life, are apt to be discouraged or disgusted, and inclined to relinquish altogether the disagreeable contest, abandoning the lists of so invidious and unprofitable a rivalry. The result is, that, in very many classes, the most distinguished positions in the long and decisive struggles of actual subsequent life, have been won by those who, in the academic course, were wholly outstripped. Many intellects, whose light was not discerned at an early age, become the brightest ornaments of literature and society,

when kindled by the inspirations that come with matured years; or by the friction of events, emergencies, and responsibilities, in the stern and exciting scenes of conflict, duty, and necessity, that open upon the faculties and feelings along the passage of life.

Mr. King, when at college, was only to be noted as a modest, unpretentious youth, quietly pursuing a course of marked regularity, uniformity, and propriety of conduct, civil and courteous to all, jostling with none, envying none, and swayed by none from the even tenor of his ways. Although known to be a young man of ample means his manners and appearance were such as not to draw the idle, or reckless, or ill-disposed around him, and his principles, taste, and judgment kept him from seeking their society. There was something then, as ever after, in his aspect and bearing, which bespoke the fact that he was a plain farmer's son.

While he refrained from engaging in the struggles of college emulation, he was no idler; but, as was subsequently shown, acquiring knowledge by careful study, and enriching his mind with a culture that made him competent to meet demands upon his faculties, in the elevated positions to which his singularly successful public life subsequently brought him.

His personal standing with his associates, and the respectful good-will cherished towards him by his classmates, was shown in the fact that he was elected by them Marshal of the day on the occasion of their valedictory ceremonies.

On the termination of his collegiate course he entered upon the study of the law, but soon discovered a distaste for its pursuit, although, as afterwards fully appeared, he possessed the qualifications of a ready and judicious advocate and of an efficient business man.

In 1824 he was married to Sarah P. only child of Hezekiah and Sally (Putnam) Flint. He took up his residence, forthwith, on the farm left by her father, then recently deceased, which he made his permanent home, and cultivated with scientific skill and successful enterprize to the day of his death. This estate had been in the possession of the Flint family for two centuries, and was not far distant from his own ancestral acres. He entered at once, upon his favorite study and occupation, as an agriculturist, enriching his mind, in the leisure hours which are the privilege of a farmer's life, in certain seasons, and states of the weather, by conversance with the masters of English literature, and by recurrence to earlier classical studies.

He was immediately called to the service of his fellow citizens in municipal offices, through the whole circle of which he successfully passed; but his time was mostly left at his own control. At this period he, probably, realized to the highest degree, and more uninterruptedly than ever after, the visions of happiness in which his imagination and affections always indulged. His home was quite secluded from the main currents of noisy life, in a region of beauty and fertility, and provided with all substantial comforts and the embellishments suitable to a person of cultivated taste, combining the advantages of education with the healthful labors of a diligent farmer. By the application of the knowledge he was acquiring, and with the use of his ample means, in agricultural operations, he soon became recognized as a guide and leader among his neighbor husbandmen. An excellent judgment kept him from the wasteful experiments and fancy speculations which have swallowed up the fortunes of so many gentlemen farmers. While availing himself of the

benefit of modern improvements, and ever ready to apply in practice any well considered suggestions, an old-fashioned persistency of habit and preference, a disposition to pause before plunging into new methods, a general feeling of contentment with his actual lot which characterized him at all times, saved him from transforming his lands from moderately and surely productive fields, into scenes of fallacious and empirical extravagance. He merited the reputation he enjoyed among practical agriculturists, and which seems to have been his chief ambition, of being an enlightened, industrious, judicious tiller of the soil. As there was nothing of the speculator, financier, or money seeker, about his ways, or methods of acting among men, strangers sometimes were curious to know how he had become so well off; and once, when asked, in easy social raillery, how he, a plain farmer, had acquired the handsome estate ascribed to him, he took no credit to himself in connection with it, but pleasantly replied that "it had come to him patrimonially and matrimonially."

He entered what may be properly called public life, when elected in 1835, as one of the representatives of his native town in the State Legislature. Some years before he had been put in nomination for that office, when party lines were not strictly drawn, and there were many candidates in the field, but failed of an election by one vote. At a subsequent stage of his career, on an occasion of great excitement, after a long struggle, one vote given to him decided the contest, and placed him on the track of eminent distinction. The first attempt to bring him forward had resulted, as has been stated, in his defeat. He did not, however, take it much to heart, observing, in his cheerful and placid manner, that he owed

his fortunate escape to having himself voted for the successful candidate. He claimed, by virtue of that fact, the right to share in the satisfactions and congratulations of the winning party.

After serving two years in the House, he was returned as one of the Senators of Essex County. He continued in the Senate four years, during the two last of which he was President of the body. The incidents connected with the termination of his service, as President of the Senate, illustrate his modest feelings, and judicious sentiments, and demonstrate the high estimate entertained by his associates of the manner in which he had performed the duties of the Chair. One of the most distinguished members of the Senate prepared a vote of thanks. Upon its being shown to Mr. King, he expressed his reluctance to have it offered in the form in which it was prepared; and, upon further reflection, addressed to the Senator the following note:

"My Dear Sir: — Even your persuasive eloquence could not prevail with the Senate to adopt such a vote. A general and common expression of satisfaction with the discharge of the duties of the Chair is all that I can expect; or, if you will allow me to say it, I think your kindness of heart and generous disposition should not extend the testimonial beyond the most common terms.

I am deeply impressed with your kindness of intention and shall ever remain most truly your friend,

Daniel P. King."

The response of the Senator was as follows:

"Dear Sir: — I will do what you want, but let me say in all sincerity I have shown that to most of our leading men, and they all say you deserve it, and it ought to be said, *and so I do seriously think.* Unless you feel quite an objection, I shall like to "adhere."

The Senator sent a copy of the vote, in the form in which it was to be offered, to the Chair, accompanying it with a playful allusion to the circumstances in these

words, "Dear Sir. — When I make the within speech, I hope you will not call me to order for personalities. — Very sincerely, &c."

The Resolve was cordially and unanimously passed as follows: —

"COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
In Senate, March 16th, 1841.

Resolved, That the thanks of the Senate be offered to the Hon. Daniel P. King, for the faithful, just, and able performance of his duties as President of the Senate. To the promptitude and accuracy of his decisions, and his unfailing courtesy, we are indebted for much of the harmony which has facilitated the business of the Session, and will make our recollections of it pleasant."

At the annual election in 1842 he was again sent to the House, as one of the representatives of his town. The Legislature assembled under peculiar excitement. There was a full attendance of the House; parties were known to be about equally divided; political passions were running high in the Legislature and in the State; and a much more than usual interest was felt in the organization of the House. On the first ballot for Speaker, the whole number of votes was 350, necessary to a choice 176. The regularly nominated whig and democratic candidates had each 173 votes. On the second ballot there were the same number of votes; the democratic candidate had 175, within one of a choice, and the whig candidate 174. On the third ballot the whig candidate had 175, within one of a choice. As it was evident that one, at least, of the scattering votes could not be obtained for either candidate, and an election seemed therefore impossible, the House adjourned. The balloting was resumed the next day, and on the first count, Daniel P. King, who had not received a vote the day before, was found to have 176, and was chosen, as each

of the regularly nominated candidates had, in turn, been defeated, by one vote.

The members who had, on the preceding ballots, thrown the scattering votes, belonged, it is understood, to what was then called the Liberty Party. Although Mr. King was an undeviating whig, and had voted all along for the whig candidate, he was known to cherish views, on the Slavery question, in advance of both the national parties, and in advance of the times. This circumstance enabled his name to attract just enough of the scattering votes, added to those of the whig party, whose candidate had withdrawn, and who, to a man, instantly rallied under his name, to carry him in; and the exciting struggle came to a sudden conclusion. The incidents attending it, and the manner in which the result had been reached, naturally gave him a commanding position through the Commonwealth, associating his name in the popular estimate with the idea of success. He began to be called the "man of luck." This prevalent impression led soon after to his transference to a higher sphere.

The position of Speaker of the House of Representatives in 1843, was one of great difficulty, and would have embarrassed a man of less firmness of nerve, equanimity and gentleness of temperament, prudence and sagacity. The administration of the State was, throughout, in the hands of the opposite party. The Governor was a democrat, having been elected in the House by one vote; and so were the entire council. There was a democratic majority in the Senate; and the House, when sifted by its own decisions of cases of contested election, was found to be democratic also. But so just and skilful was his conduct in the Chair, and so impartial, correct and prompt his rulings, that he filled the place to the entire satisfac-

tion of all parties and interests, who concurred heartily in sustaining his authority, and in expressing, at the close of the session their thanks for the "courteous, able, and impartial manner," in which he had presided over their deliberations and proceedings.

His success, as a public man, presents a singular instance. There was nothing in his deportment and bearing as a private person that would suggest his adaptation to high and commanding positions. His address, though pleasing, was wholly unpretentious. His stature was of the medium size, and his general aspect gave no indication of strength or energy of character. His countenance, though amiable and genial, was in no respect striking. His attainments and culture were not made manifest by any display in ordinary circumstances. His dress, while scrupulously neat, was always plain, never aspiring to or approaching the character of fashionable. In any company of men it might have been supposed, from the avoidance of obtrusiveness in his mien, that he would pass unnoticed. In all public bodies, however, a latent but decisive force of some kind, brought him strangely into prominence; and when thus called out, whether in the arduous, responsible, and controlling position of presiding officer, or in casual debate, he met the demands of the place and occasion, with ease, ability and success. His voice was flexible, and capable of rising to great strength; his manner in speaking was collected and natural, and his utterances sensible and acceptable, often vivid, bold and impressive.

During the seven years of his service in the Massachusetts Legislature, when occupying a place on the floor, although not a frequent speaker, he was a vigilant and efficient member. While in the House of Representa-

tives, he rendered a great service to the cause of education, on the 14th of January, 1837, by introducing and carrying into effect, an order instructing the Committee on Education to consider the expediency of providing by law for the better education of teachers of the public schools. This movement, followed up and enforced, at the same session by James G. Carton, a member from Lancaster, led to the establishment of the Board of Education, and of the several Normal Schools in the Commonwealth.

Mr. King's chief efforts as a State legislator were in aid of the agricultural interest, which through life was his favorite and predominating object of study, and care, as well as pursuit. He was not a fancy, but a genuine farmer, busy year in and year out, on his own fields, superintending and sharing in the work of husbandry, in the order of the seasons, and the same routine as his neighbors. But he was impressed with a conviction that in agriculture, at least equally with other branches of human occupation, there was a crying demand for science. He made it a subject of study in his library, and of instructive experiment, on his own grounds. The deepest imprint left by his career on the journals of the two branches of the Legislature of the State, relates to agriculture. He brought forward a proposition, since carried into effect, of establishing a college in that department of instruction, and for providing a professorship of the same in Harvard College.

A majority of the whole vote given, was then, as it ever had been, required by law in Massachusetts, for an election to any political office. Much inconvenience had often been experienced; but it had now got to be a serious public mischief and injury. At the State election

in 1842, many towns failed to elect. To the State Senate only twenty-four out of forty were elected, and only three out of ten members of Congress. A third party had come into the field, and had become strong enough, in almost all parts of the Commonwealth, to hold the balance of power. It was impossible for either of the old parties to conciliate it. Neither of them, in many towns, counties and districts, could command votes enough to neutralize the new party, under the majority system. Many seats in Congress long remained vacant, while the most momentous questions were pending, some of which, no doubt, would have had a better issue if the full voice of Massachusetts had been heard.

In the District, of which Danvers was a part, there was no choice of a member of Congress, in November, 1842. The democratic candidate had 5,403 votes, the whig 4,928; all others, 1,230. The vote of the whig candidate who was the sitting member, was overbalanced by that of the democratic candidate, 475, and by the combined votes of all others, 1,705. The prospect of recovering the District by the whigs, was indeed gloomy, and almost hopeless. Another trial was ordered, at a special election. The whigs resolved to stand by their noble candidate. At the election, February 13th, 1843, he received 3,904, the democrat, 4,978, all others, 1,349. The democratic plurality over the whig candidate was increased to 1,074, and the entire plurality over him, to 2,423. The tedious and disagreeable contest was relinquished by the whig candidate, who withdrew his name. On the 2d of March, a convention of the whig party in the District nominated Daniel P. King. The next trial took place April 3d. On that day the vote stood, democratic, 4,621, whig 4,480; all others 1,107. The demo-

cratic plurality over the whig was reduced to 141; the entire adverse plurality, to 848. This result deepened the impression that Mr. King was indeed the "winning man," and that, as ever before, his success would, sooner or later, end the struggle. Everything, as usual, favored him. The democratic candidate, one of the most able and distinguished public men of his day, and whose voice, like a bugle, always rallied the democracy, as no one else ever did, withdrew from the field. With his long trained political sagacity he could not fail to interpret the figures of the April election as the hand writing on the wall. On the 5th of June the next trial took place. The democratic candidate received 2,854 votes; the scattering votes, all told, amounted to 775; Mr. King received 3,711 votes, and was elected by 82 majority, saving the District to his party. He held it, ever after, by secure majorities, to the end of his life.

He took his seat at the opening of the twenty-eighth Congress, December 4, 1843. A law had been passed, requiring the election of members of the House of Representatives to be in single districts. It had, however, been disregarded in some States, and persons appeared, elected in violation of its provisions, claiming seats, and had been allowed to vote for Speaker. A protest was entered against the procedure, signed by fifty members. The names of John Quincy Adams, Robert C. Winthrop, Charles Hudson, Daniel P. King and Joseph Grinnell were attached to the paper. On the 16th of December, Mr. King presented the Resolves of the Massachusetts Legislature against the annexation of Texas to the Union. On the 39th of December he took part in a warm debate, in behalf of slaves and free negroes in the District of Columbia. His course on the slavery question had been early marked out and was ever persistently pursued.

On the 26th of January, 1844, a passage occurred in the House that gave him great prominence, and made a deep impression, in his favor, on the friends of freedom, and the admirers of spirit and courage. Certain resolves had come in from the Legislature of Massachusetts, proposing an amendment of the Constitution, that would base representation on free persons alone, thereby striking out the element that gave preponderence to the Slave States, by virtue of the provision counting three-fifths of the slaves. Speaking of the resolves, Mr. King stated that the petitions on which they were founded were signed by sixty thousand freemen of Massachusetts. A Southern member, interrupting, put enquiries to this effect — whether those petitions had not been signed, and the form of their heading prepared, by a runaway slave from Virginia? Mr. King replied, that "he presumed the petition was signed by freemen only, for in Massachusetts they had no slaves, but every man, created in the image of his Maker." At this point, shouts of "order," "order," in loud and angry tones resounded through the hall; heeding them not, but raising his voice to the full volume and height of which it was capable, in tones distinctly audible above the uproar, he concluded his sentence "owes allegiance to Him alone." The Speaker declared him out of order, but his manly bearing shamed down the excitement, conciliated the better feeling of the House, and he continued his speech. This was one of the tornadoes, of panic and rage combined, which in those days, swept over and silenced debate, whenever the subject of slavery was freely handled, or the great principles it violated, vindicated. It was, however, as much in pursuance of policy as passion that such outbreaks occurred. Intimidation was used, in this way, to sup-

press the utterance of northern sentiments. Mr. King being a new member of youthful appearance, and of modest, quiet, and gentle bearing, the idea was encouraged by those who did not know him, that he could, in this way, if not overawed, be embarrassed and silenced. The onslaught was made for this purpose, and with this expectation. It was never attempted again.

The fact that the Speaker pronounced his language out of order, shows the extent to which the judgments and common-sense of men were demoralized, under the influence of Slave-state predominance.

On the 23d of May, 1844, he introduced, and carried through the House an amendment to the Navy Appropriation Bill to prohibit spirit rations, substituting their value in money. At this same session he introduced a resolution to complete the breakwater at Sandy Bay (Rockport) in Massachusetts. On the 23d of December, the Committee on the District of Columbia was instructed, on his motion, to consider the subject of the establishment of an asylum for the reception of insane persons in the military and naval service of the United States, of the insane poor of the District, and such other insane persons as might be committed by their friends. In the 28th Congress he served on the Standing Committees, on Revolutionary Claims, and on Expenditures on the Public Buildings; of the latter he was Chairman. But, throughout his service in Congress, whether Chairman or not, he was entrusted by his committees, to a great extent, to make their reports, and conduct the management of them in the House. Few members did more of this work, and few did it better.

In the 29th Congress he was assigned to the Standing Committees, on Revolutionary Claims, and on Accounts.

On the 30th of January, 1845, he reported from the Committee on Accounts, and carried through a resolution to secure a strict accountability for all the contingent expenses of the House. On the 14th of March he again introduced a resolution for completing the breakwater at Rockport; and others, respectively, for the improvement of the harbor of Lane's Cove, in Gloucester, and for the preservation of the harbor of Lynn. On the 4th of April, he took, as on all occasions, a leading part in debate, advocating the continuance of the Fishing Bounties. On the 22d of April, he urged the importance of providing, in the application of the Smithsonian fund, for the diffusion of the knowledge of agriculture through the country, by the appointment of a Professor in that department, and the opening, in connection with it, of a national agricultural farm-school. On the 25th of April, he closed a protracted and earnest debate on the Fishing Bounty, with a brief but eloquent speech which was felt to have been effective. The bill was forthwith ordered to its passage by a vote of seventy-three to thirty-two. In his speech, on this occasion, after a condensed summary of the history, and vindication of the importance of the Bounty, turning his attention to those members who had attempted to depreciate the merits of fishermen, as a class, particularly to one who had slurred their patriotism and said they would not fight, he remarked, "I would not advise that gentleman, or any other, to go into Marblehead and say so. Their bravery has never before been questioned. It was proverbial. They were a brave, noble, patriotic, and country-loving race." On the 4th of May he moved an amendment to the Deficiency Appropriation Bill, adding twenty-five thousand dollars for the Naval Hospital fund. After a debate of some

length the amendment prevailed by a vote of sixty-two to fifty-five. On the 15th of May, he carried, after a contest, a bill reported by him, for the relief of the owners and crew of the schooner "Tancred," a fishing vessel, by a yea and nay vote of eighty-five to eighty-two. On the 25th of May, he carried, after a vigorous opposition, an appropriation to supply a deficiency in the fund for the relief of sick and disabled seamen, by a vote of seventy-nine to forty-five. On the 17th of June he made two ineffectual attempts to get the House to provide for the erection of a monument to General Warren; he earnestly besought them, by such an act, to commemorate, in a manner worthy of the day, and worthy of the American people, the anniversary of the battle of Bunker Hill. He also reported a bill to erect a monument to General Herkimer.

Mr. King was a persistent and uncompromising opponent of the Mexican war. He voted against it, in every shape, and from beginning to end. On the 18th of July, he moved an amendment to a bill for raising volunteer and other troops, in these words: "Provided—That immediate measures be taken for the peaceful and honorable settlement of all difficulties and differences between this country and the sister Republic of Mexico." The amendment was rejected. On the passage of the bill there were one hundred and fifty-nine yeas to four nays, two of whom were John Quincy Adams and Daniel P. King.

At the opening of the Second Session of the 29th Congress, he was made Chairman of the Committee on Accounts. On the 29th of December, he presented the Memorial of the Society of Friends in New England against the Mexican war, and made a very earnest and

effective speech in its support. A vehement and angry debate arose. He succeeded in having the Memorial appropriately referred, but failed to carry a vote to print it. A report of the proceedings of the House, on this occasion, embracing the discussion on the floor, was printed as a tract, that went into great circulation among Friends in England and America.

The 30th Congress convened Dec. 6, 1847. Parties were nearly equally divided. On the second ballot Robert C. Winthrop received the number of votes necessary to a choice, 110. Mr. King was made Chairman of the Committee on Revolutionary Claims, and also Chairman of the Committee on Accounts. The latter position came to him under circumstances strikingly illustrating the sense entertained by all parties of the value of his services. When Mr. Winthrop was composing his committees, it seemed desirable and proper, in his liberal and enlightened view, to render a respectful courtesy to the democratic candidate run against him for the Chair, Linn Boyd, of Kentucky, afterwards for some years Speaker of the House. No doubt with the full concurrence of his friend King, he placed Boyd at the head of the Committee on Accounts. That gentleman, the very next day, rose in his place and asked to be excused from serving. His request was granted, and Mr. King was reinstated. Boyd felt that experience, business qualities, and fearlessness in dealing with claimants and persons of all sorts employed in connection with contingent expenses, which Mr. King had shown himself to possess, were necessary in that situation. The transaction was creditable to all parties.

On the 10th of February, 1848, Mr. King again introduced a Memorial of the Society of Friends in New

England, praying for a speedy termination of the Mexican war, and moved that it be referred and printed. The latter point particularly awakened a similar contest, as in the preceding Congress, but this time he prevailed. The debate was quite animated. He was ably supported by his colleague, Mr. Palfrey. The House refused to lay the motion on the table by a yea and nay vote of ninety-three to eighty-one, and ordered the printing by a vote, taken in the same manner, of ninety-eight to eighty-three. On the 17th of March, he resisted successfully an attempt to reduce the number of copies, to be printed, of the Annual Agricultural Report prepared by the Commissioner of Patents. Whenever an opportunity occurred he was on hand to vindicate the claims and interests of the farming population, with earnestness and energy.

The 31st Congress met December 3, 1849. No choice of a Speaker of the House was made until December 22d, when Howell Cobb of Georgia was elected in pursuance of a Resolve passed by the House, that after a certain number of ineffectual ballots, a plurality should elect; Mr. Cobb receiving, on the sixty-third roll call, 102 votes out of 221 cast. Mr. Winthrop received 99. Eight members voted persistently for David Wilmot. Mr. King was continued in his place as Chairman of the Committee on Accounts, being the only whig to which that position on a Standing Committee was conceded. On the 24th of June, 1850, he made a zealous effort to extend and complete the provisions of law in favor of the soldiers of the war of 1812.

While in Congress Mr. King confined himself mostly to incidental debates in connection with the current business of legislation, and to discussions, often partaking of a free conversational character, on various subjects and

questions, arising from hour to hour. He was not much given to what is called speech-making; although led, in a few instances, by his sense of duty, to address the House, at length, in elaborate efforts. On the 4th of February, 1847, the House being in committee of the whole on the state of the Union, when by usage members are allowed to speak on any subject, and range over the whole field of legislation and politics, he discussed the subjects of the Privateer Fund, Naval Asylums, and the Mexican war. On the latter topic he gave full expression to his views in bold and eloquent language. A few extracts will show the style and spirit of his remarks.

"Believing that the war did not exist by the act of Mexico — and was unjust, inexpedient and wanton, I voted against the measure, and from that day to this, although I have been assailed by the minions of Executive power, and the defenders of Executive usurpation, in this House, and out of the House — although I have been stigmatized as a coward and a traitor by a venal party press here and elsewhere, I have sought no opportunity of denying, explaining, excusing, or retracting my position. In my judgment this war was bad in its inception, has been bad in its progress, and nothing but evil can be its consequences. A treaty might have been made, and peace secured, without recourse to those last, worst arguments, the cannon, the sword, and the bayonet; but the object desired was, not peace with Mexico, but a piece of Mexico. In a minority of fourteen I voted against this war upon a feeble and distracted, a priest-ridden and faction-torn sister Republic. For this we have been denounced as traitors and cowards. If an earnest desire to save my country from ruin and disgrace be treason, then am I a traitor; if the fear to do wrong

make a man a coward, then am I a coward. I will make no empty boast of an ardent love of country, but I mean that my life and conduct shall manifest it. I hear many men talk of their willingness to shed their last drop of blood in this Mexican war, but most of them are careful not to expose themselves where they may shed the first drop. Some of our political friends, and many of our political opponents, have kindly warned those who oppose the prosecution of this war, of the fate of those who opposed the war of 1776, and the war of 1812. There is no similarity in the cases. Then great principles were involved. We had an enemy every way our equal, except in a noble enthusiasm for the right, and a devoted love of country. In those wars we laid up a rich store of renown. I would not risk the proud trophies won by our brave soldiers and sailors. They are too precious to be trampled in vulgar dust, or to be draggled in inglorious gore. We have been warned that opposition to this war would make us unpopular. An honest, independent freeman, will ask, is the measure right? not, will it be popular? He may be willing to court popular favor, but he will never become her slave. Popularity is a frail staff. The consciousness of meaning right and doing right will sustain a man in this life, and, at its close, be the ministering angel of peace and hope. A friend of the President in this House, a gentleman from Virginia, has said, 'he would show no mercy till the war was ended. If he could have his own way, one blow should follow another without mercy'—and in the bitterness of his wrath he did not spare those fourteen, who, he said, 'were destined to be famous in story, and, so help him Heaven, so far as his own fame and future reputation were concerned, he would infinitely rather be the poorest

volunteer whose bones mouldered on the banks of the Rio Bravo, with no stone to mark his grave, no requiem but the wild bird's shriek and the howling winds, than the mightiest whig orator who thundered forth his denunciations of the war.' Now, sir, I am no orator, as the gentleman is; and about the manner of living, of dying, and of burial, there may be a difference of taste. But I would prefer, after having enjoyed all life's blessings, and performed all life's duties, to wrap the drapery of my couch about me, and, without braggart boasting or unmanly fears, await my last solemn hour. I would that my friends should drop a few natural, though unavailing, tears, and then that they should carry out my bier to some sequestered spot, where overarching trees might drop their autumnal leaves; and there, if the hand of affection should ever raise a stone, let it bear only this inscription — A LOVER OF PEACE, OF LIBERTY, OF HIS COUNTRY — HE VOTED AGAINST THE MEXICAN WAR. I have, perhaps, as little desire for a mausoleum as the gentleman, but since he has given me a lecture, let me say to him, the best monument for this world, and the best hope for the future, is a well spent life; the gentleman's ideal of a well spent life would lead him to these Mexican wars; why, then, does he not go where glory waits him?"

In the foregoing passages reference is had to a vote in the House on the 11th of May, 1846, on a bill declaring that a state of war existed between this country and Mexico — 174 voted in the affirmative, and 14 in the negative, including among the latter, J. Q. Adams, Ashmun, Grinnell, Hudson, and D. P. King of Massachusetts.

A member from South Carolina had declared that

"every foot of territory we shall permanently occupy south of thirty-six degrees, thirty minutes, will be Slave territory:" he affirmed this to be "the known determination of the southern people," expressing a belief that the North and West would not "resist to the death" such a consummation, and that "the Union will never be dissolved on that question." He planted his conviction on "the laws of God;" and in answer to a question put by another member, had the assurance to say, "I will answer for God; because the opinion is written in his revealed word. I can speak authoritatively on this point." In reply to his arrogant positions, Mr. King said.

"The gentleman may represent the South, and probably does; but he has shown no credentials from heaven, and the North is here to speak for itself. Because the North has already yielded much, the South expects greater concessions; because, by strategem or treason, they have got possession of the outposts, they now expect us to surrender the very citadel. For once, let the South know that some northern men have northern principles; that though they love their favor and approbation much, they love more the favor and approbation of their own neighbors and constituents. On this great question of the extension of slavery, with all its fearful consequences, let it never be said of any one representative of the free states, that he sold his vote, and, like the base Judean, for a few pieces of dirty silver, threw away a pearl worth more than all prospects of political advancement, worth more than all prospects of earthly enjoyment." Alluding to the "undying fame" of Nathan Dane, for having rescued the northwestern territories of the Union from slavery, by the ordinance of 1787, he concluded his speech as follows. "If, in 1847, his successor can achieve no such renown,

he will at least, on this ground, stand firm, that by no voluntary servitude of his, by no treason against duty, conscience, humanity, and heaven, shall slavery ever be tolerated in any territory hereafter to be acquired; by no deed of his shall the glorious memories of the past be tarnished, or the bright hopes and prospects of the future be clouded."

The speech throughout was free and fluent in style and thought, glowing in diction, warm in its coloring, and fearless in tone and manner.

On the 21st of May, 1850, he made another elaborate speech, in committee of the whole on the state of the Union, discussing mainly the California question, then pending, and the ordinance of 1787. There are passages in this speech, particularly interesting, as they may be considered his farewell expressions of gratitude to the constituency that had given him such a steadfast and generous support. An event was wrapped up in the folds of an inscrutable and not far distant future, that would terminate forever his relations to them and all sublunary things. We receive his utterances, on this occasion, as attestations of the approving conscience, with which, as about to leave the world, he looked back upon his congressional career.

The speech is an able and interesting argument and protest against the extension of slavery. The first paragraph, which, being personal in its allusions, is all that it is particularly pertinent to insert in this memoir, is as follows:

"Mr. Chairman:—I am not certain that I should not congratulate myself that I have been recognized by you, although, with many other members of more agility, I have been for some days practising the athletic exercise

of jumping for the floor. In the uncertainty of obtaining it I have not given myself that careful preparation befitting the attempt to speak on a subject so important. I have been a patient listener, and a careful reader of the speeches which have been made here and in the other wing of the capitol, but I have little expectation that I shall be able to add one ray to the flood of light, or to contribute a single item to the fund of information which has been accumulated. For me, there is not that excuse so frequently given for desiring to address the House, for I have made no speech which I desire to modify, I have given no vote which I wish to explain, I have occupied no position which I have found it necessary to fortify or define, and I have taken no step which I wish to retrace. Nor do I attempt to awaken the echoes of this hall, that their reverberations may be heard in far off Massachusetts. I have surveyed my District from its Atlantic shores to its western limits, and from the metropolis of the State to its northern borders, but can find no such town, hamlet, or precinct, as Buncombe. I have a most charitable, confiding, and generous constituency, who burden me with no instructions, and vex me with no remonstrances. They know that I mean faithfully to watch their interests, and fearlessly and honestly to make my record. They know that I opposed the unconstitutional admission of Texas; that I voted against the wicked Mexican war; and that I have declared, on this floor, my determination that by no act of mine, shall one foot of Slave territory be added to this country. They expect from me a straightforward, consistent course. In the conviction that words are but the puny children of earth, and firm, resolute, determined actions the full grown sons of heaven, I have not thought it necessary to waste precious

time in idle discussion and fruitless argument. My commission is not to exasperate, nor to agitate; not to labor to round a period or polish a sentence against slavery, but to act for liberty."

On the 10th of July, 1850, the day on which the death of President Taylor was announced to the two Houses of Congress, Mr. King left Washington, on a visit to his home, to attend to some business requiring his presence there. He had previously been somewhat unwell, but it was not supposed by others, nor perhaps apprehended by him, that there was anything alarming or serious in his indisposition. The pleasing anticipations of a return to his quiet and retired home, after the exhausting labors and exciting cares of that critical period of our public affairs, seemed to revive his strength. He appeared to be as well as usual, and felt the benefit of rest for a few days; but the seeds of latent disease were too deep to be eradicated. The fatal effects soon became apparent, and he died July 25th. His return and illness had hardly become known, beyond the immediate neighborhood; and when his death was announced, the shock was deeply felt by the people of his District, of the Commonwealth, and throughout the Country.

Although there was no appearance of ruggedness in his frame, his health had generally been good. His well known habits of simplicity of living, the pure air that swept over his beautiful fields, all the circumstances of his happy and innocent life, his cheerful aspect, and fresh and still youthful complexion, all had given promise of at least the ordinary length of days, and rendered his death as inexplicable as it was surprising. It cannot be doubted, I think, that a residence, for larger portions of so many years, in a manner so different from that of his farmer

home, subject to such irregularity of hours, perpetually pressed upon by such responsible duties, had slowly but utterly sapped the foundations of a constitution originally perhaps quite delicate; and the flame of life was extinguished with a breath.

The following letter shows how the intelligence was received in Washington:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, U. S.,
Washington, Friday, 26th July, 1850,
half past 2 o'clock, P. M.

DEAR SIR:—Your telegraphic dispatch of yesterday has this moment reached me. I am most deeply grieved to hear of the death of my excellent friend and colleague, Mr King. We had been encouraged by the last accounts, to believe that he was quite out of danger, and had hoped to see him among us again at an early day. His loss will be severely felt by us all. His long experience in Congress, and his entire fidelity in the discharge of every duty, had made him a most valuable person to his constituents and to the country. There is a strong expression of regret for his death, and of respect for his memory, throughout the House of Representatives, as the event has become known since I commenced writing this letter, and members from all parts of the country are speaking of him, as of a just and good man whose loss they deplore.

To-morrow his death will be formally announced in the House, and the customary honors be paid to his memory. I should most gladly pronounce the eulogy myself, but it seems peculiarly to belong to Mr. Rockwell, who has been his messmate and more immediate friend for many years. I may perhaps, however, be permitted to add a word, expressive of my cordial regard for him in life, and my sincere sorrow for his premature death.

I am, in haste, but very respectfully and truly, yours,

Robert S. Daniels, Esq. ROB'T C. WINTHROP.

In the House of Representatives, immediately after reading the journal of the preceding day, on July 27th, Mr. Rockwell, of the Berkshire District, announced the melancholy event, in interesting and deep felt expressions. In the course of a concise and touching eulogy, he bore testimony to Mr. King's "unassuming, industrious, and

conscientious discharge of every duty." "I hesitate not to say, that no member has more constantly and faithfully devoted his time and talents to the public service than my deceased colleague. He was daily, hourly, almost continually in his seat, with a clear and constant understanding of the business under consideration. In the discharge of his duties, in the various committees upon which he has been placed, he has been alike industrious and exemplary. In attending to the interests of his constituents which were manifold, as his district was a highly commercial one, his diligence could not be exceeded. He acted and voted always; he spoke seldom. In all the relations of private life, he was without reproach; nay, more, his life was an active blessing to all around him. It was made such by the religious principle, which was the living spring of all his conduct. He was an humble, active, devoted christian. No pressure of public duty, no desire for ease or relaxation, induced him to neglect the religious duties, which he deemed as essential and proper here as at home; or the ordinances of the church to which he belonged. If to a strange ear this seems the language of eulogy, I can only say, I cannot change it, for it is the simple truth."

Mr. Winthrop spoke of him as follows, referring to the fact that during the whole seven years of Mr. King's service in Congress, he had been associated with him, "I can truly say that I have rarely met with a juster or worthier man, or with one more scrupulously faithful to every obligation to his neighbor, his country, and his God.

His devotion as a public servant, his integrity as a private citizen, and the high moral and religious character which he sustained in all the relations of life, had endeared

him not merely to his immediate constituents, but to the whole people of Massachusetts; and there is no one who was more likely to receive at their hands, at no distant day, the reward of an honorable ambition, in the highest honors of his native state.

He prided himself, as any one may well pride himself, on being a good farmer; and the farmers of his neighborhood were justly proud of him, as one of the most intelligent, observing and scientific of their number.

We may well count it, sir, among the consolations of this hour, that he was permitted by a kind Providence, after so long a detention amid these scenes of strife, to revisit his native fields, to die under his own roof, surrounded by his family and friends, and to lie down at last beneath the soil which he had adorned with his hand, and which was so dear to his heart."

Joseph R. Chandler, of Philadelphia, is everywhere recognized as a man of genius, culture, taste, and learning. No mind is more richly stored with the treasures of elegant literature. He followed Mr. Winthrop in extended remarks, of which the following are passages.

"It would, I think, be injustice to our late fellow member—to the claim which his abundant virtues had upon the respect of all with whom he was in any way associated—to imagine that the afflictive rod of Providence had not reached beyond the State of which the deceased was one of the Representatives in this House.

Wherever the Hon. Daniel P. King cultivated an acquaintance he made a friend. That circumstance, sir, has bowed a thousand hearts to the blow which Providence has inflicted in the death of our lamented friend. On that ground, sir, I speak, not for myself alone, nor to occupy the attention of this House with any expression

of my proper sorrow; but in this solemn moment, when the eyes of the House are turned towards the seat now left vacant, to say that the associates—the household companions—the members of the mess of which Mr. King formed a part, have a peculiar grief in the deprivation which his death has brought. We had found him, sir, accomplished in all the riches of classic study, and able to command, for the delight of social intercourse, the treasures of science and the arts, while his attainments, and the profitable use to which he could apply them, were exhibited with a modesty that seemed to be alarmed at the admiration which such attainments, and such a use of them, naturally excited. Nothing with him remained unproductive, the wide-spread farm, the well stored intellect, and the treasures of domestic affection, year by year, augmented in beauty and usefulness, by well directed skill and careful cultivation.

Mr. King, sir, was a gentleman—a gentleman of that school which teaches self-abnegation when the feelings and views of others are concerned. The apparent diffidence of his manners for a moment concealed the merit which lay beneath, but the solid, substantial qualities of his heart, and the full cultivation of his intellect, combined with the gentleness of his manners and the purity of his morals, to insure in a little time the respect and the affection of his associates.

Mr. King, sir, was a christian. The virtues to which I have already alluded, owed their greatest attraction to the christian spirit in which they originated, and in which they were exhibited. He was kind and forbearing; watchful over his own words and manners; and ever prompt to aid, by all appropriate means, those whose condition appealed to his superior attainments or larger

possessions. And the bland courtesy of the gentleman blended in perfect harmony with the meekness and purity of the christian. And if I were called on to present, from public life, the true exemplification of the christian gentleman, I know of no character that would more beautifully illustrate the idea, and supply the model, than that of Daniel P. King.

The terrible affliction that has made desolate the home of those that gathered into the domestic circle of the deceased, is not to be described. The arm upon which filial reverence leaned with confidence, is palsied by death —the heart, which the purest affections shared, has ceased to beat; and sorrow that springs from such a visitation, is too sanctified for us to disturb—the expression of sympathy itself might be an intrusion.

There are few in this hall, I imagine, Mr. Speaker, who had not some knowledge of the character of the deceased; and none, I venture to say, who had not a respect for him just in proportion to that knowledge. I confess that, though older than he, I had learned to love the man for the beautiful simplicity of his character; to admire him for his social virtues, and to respect him for his enviable attainments. The friendship, which was consequent upon intercourse, was a prize which made life delightful, and the pain consequent upon his unexpected death, deprives the grief of utterance. I was proud of his friendship as I was covetous of his intercourse. He was kind in granting both to me.

> "But greater gifts were his — a happier doom,
> A brighter genius, and a purer heart;
> A fate more envied, and an earlier tomb."

A similar tribute was paid in the Senate, by John Davis of Massachusetts, and both Houses instantly adjourned.

At a convention of the whigs of his Congressional District, held at Salem, August 8th, 1850, resolutions were passed, expressing the deep sense entertained by his fellow citizens of all parties, of the loss they had sustained, in the death of their "honored and beloved Representative," in the following terms:

"*Resolved*, That by his private virtues, his modest worth, and his inflexible public principles, he had secured, to a degree never surpassed, their affectionate regard and deep-rooted confidence.

Resolved, That through his whole course in Congress, by his labors on the floor and in committees, by his speeches and his votes, he faithfully and uniformly reflected the sentiments and expressed the will of his constituents, and, from the beginning to the end, was a true Massachusetts Representative."

These Resolutions were signed by Nathaniel Silsbee, Chairman; and by Joseph B. F. Osgood and William Babson, Secretaries.

In closing the review of his Congressional career, it may in brief be said, that he was one of the most useful and efficient members of the National Legislature. The items that have been presented in this memoir, merely indicate certain special duties and efforts. The reports he made from the committees to which he was attached, and occasional passages occurring in debate, in which he bore a part, are too numerous to be given fully and in detail. His manner in speaking, as well as his industry and accuracy in business, were alike adapted to give him influence. He was an easy fluent speaker. His voice was pleasing, distinct, and capable of great expression and expansion, rising to meet the demands of the sentiment, and equal to the exigency of the most stormy excitement, to which the great body, assembled in the capacious and lofty old hall of the House, was then frequently liable to be wrought up. The testimony that has been adduced from his associates, is corroborated

by the reminiscences of the leading minds that noticed his course there. They all speak of him as one of the most respected members of the successive Congresses to which he belonged.

'Mr. King was for many years a Trustee of the Massachusetts Lunatic Asylum, member of the Essex Historical Society, of the Essex Natural History Society, and of the New England Historic-Genealogical Society; and also a member and Trustee of the Massachusetts Society for promoting Agriculture. He was one of the Vice Presidents of the National Whig Convention, in 1840, and President of one of the great annual conventions of the whigs of Massachusetts. He was Secretary of the Essex Agricultural Society from 1842 to 1844, and one of its Vice Presidents and Trustees ever after, to his death. He delivered its annual address in 1835.

Several occasional addresses and orations, delivered by him, were published from time to time. His "Eulogy, at the funeral of General Gideon Foster, Nov. 3d, 1845," with accompanying notes, is a valuable contribution to our historical and patriotic literature. His "Address, commemorative of the seven young men of Danvers, who were slain at the Battle of Lexington," delivered on the sixtieth anniversary of the battle, is a very superior and finished performance. In its structure, in its substance, in its style, it ranks in the first class of performances of the kind, penetrated with and inspiring the warmest and loftiest love of country and liberty; a stream of pure elegance of diction and illustrations from the opening to the close, and proving that in his early education, and in the seclusion of his home, he had cultivated his taste, and enriched his mind, by the study of the masters of English undefiled.

The following extract from remarks made by him, at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Essex Agricultural Society, on the death of his immediate predecessor in Congress, the Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, is a specimen of the style of the one, and a just portraiture of the other.

"Many have admired the fluent and silver-toned eloquence of his tongue; more have admired the noble generosity and warmth of his heart. Intercourse with a sordid world did not make him selfish; in the bustle of political strife, and in the noisy turmoil of party conflict, he never lost his equanimity or his self respect. Envy and jealousy found no resting place in his pure bosom. His opponents were never his enemies; if they would not adopt his opinions, they could not withhold their respect and esteem for the man. The broad mantle of his charity, so seldom needed by himself, he was ever ready to throw over the errors and faults of others. He loved good men of every party and sect, and did homage to virtue and sincerity wherever he found their shrine. In his own loved Commonwealth and in distant states, he had many warmly attached friends, many lovers of liberty and their country, who esteemed him worthy of higher honors, and who will lament his death as a public loss.

Descended from a puritan family, Mr. Saltonstall made an honored name more honorable; of New England stock, he was worthy to represent the stern virtues of New England; they were his pride and his only boast. Truth, honor, and virtue, he worshipped always, not because of the sure and adequate reward which they pay, nor because it is fashionable occasionally to make a pilgrimage to their altars, but because for their own sakes, he loved truth, and honor, and virtue. Liberty,

religion, and holiness, he loved, and his reverence for God was habitual and controlling. We shall no more here be cheered by his presence, animated by his eloquence, or counselled by his wisdom; we shall no more meet him in this world, but if faithful to our trusts and duties, we shall meet him in happier regions."

Of Mr. King's moral and personal character, one who had the best means of judging, has left this testimony: "In private life, it is too little to say of him that he was without reproach, and hardly too much, that he was everything that a man should be, in all his relations to his family and his fellow men." The following beautiful and touching passages are from discourses delivered in the church, to which he belonged, on the Sunday after his funeral, by its then Pastor, Mr. F. P. Appleton. The text was from John, xviii, 4.

"Such thoughts as these, my friends, have come this last week, as I have remembered the life, and seen the death, of one who has been the true friend to me and to many of you; known to you all, through a series of years of public life. A faithful friend, an honorable man, and one who strove to be a christian. Restraining the strong language which love and gratitude urge me to use, I speak of him and his life, calmly, as the truth bids.

Suddenly as he died, when a score of years for future usefulness seemed prophesied by his calm energy, and health unbroken by any excess—suddenly as he laid his armor by, his work was done. More truly of him, than of most, it can be said, 'he accomplished the work his Father gave him to do.' Because as I well know, he looked to that Father for guidance, and heeded his word. Because he trusted God more than man, and tried to serve man by serving his God. His work was accom-

plished; because whenever it came, in whatever form, his aim was to do it faithfully. The slight duty was respected even as the greatest—that which but one would ever hear of, no one but God, promptly as though a million eyes were watching. He helped the poor widow, earnestly and willingly as he did the well known and powerful—and it is such virtue as this, the Angels of Heaven smile down upon. He worshipped his God, and loved his Savior, and was kind to the unfortunate, alike where these virtues were, and were not, popular. Mature himself in years, one at least I know, had good reason to feel that he sympathized with and encouraged youth.

Amid the wild turmoil of passion and corruption in our nation's councils, he kept his nobleness of purpose. His quiet word weighed much there, because a *man* spoke it."

The following, from an eminent and everywhere esteemed clergyman of the Episcopal Church, will be read with interest:

In the year 1816, Daniel P. King and myself were pupils together in Phillips Academy, Andover. He was a beautiful, intelligent, well dressed, and well bred boy; very neat in his person, and very civil in his manners. It so happened, I cannot tell how, that he chanced to have his seat with me in the school room. The arrangement of seats and desks was so that the pupils sat by couplets, and he and I occupied seats together. An acquaintance followed, which grew, almost instantaneously, into a warm, earnest and enduring friendship. Notwithstanding the difference of age and condition between us — he very much my junior, a child of wealth and of every favorable prospect, and I a poor charity scholar — yet it was a circumstance which I was proud of, and have been to this day, that he habitually sought my company, often in preference to that of the pleasanter companions of his own age.

In 1817 he invited me urgently to spend a short vacation at his father's, in Danvers. It was a delightful week, one to be remembered by me. I had the pleasure not only of making the new acquaintance of his parents, but that of seeing him, my young friend, in his home. I was received very cordially, and with the kindest hospitality. The

father was a man of very decided expression, like that of one who expects obedience. His manner, relative to the son, was that of one who having been always obeyed, was gratified in showing the power which the son gained thereby. A chaise was always at hand for our pleasure, and Daniel, in driving over all parts of Danvers and vicinity, related with surprising minuteness and precision, historical events, traditions, and hearsays, as we passed along; some of them of a public, some, not less interesting, of a more restricted character. His quick and ready memory of names, persons and particulars, was then remarkable, imbuing his narrations with a charm. And afterwards, perhaps (as I have often supposed), might have given him very great advantage in the position of presiding officer of a dignified assembly. He had from his boyhood, a great exactness of mind, which came out in personal appearance, and might be seen in a not over done, but very agreeable civility. Though I knew him intimately at school and at College, in the time of life and circumstances when such things are to be expected, if ever, not an act, not a word of rudeness, ever came to my observation.

I went to College the year before him. He entered Harvard in 1819. Our intimacy was continued in Cambridge, and was such that I have inadvertently been betrayed into speaking of him as a classmate. The same exemplary deportment, habitual to him, was sustained through his College life.

After leaving College we interchanged visits, though but seldom comparatively; and we met occasionally. Our abated frequency of intercourse was not his fault. We were settled in different lines of life. Settled in Lowell, in circumstances that required every moment, and much more than all of my time, I had little opportunity for the calls of pleasure and of friendship. He visited me repeatedly in Lowell, and I him in Danvers. But we always regretted that we met so seldom. I blame myself that I did not make the occasions of meeting more frequent.

The last time I saw him, his expressions of affection were as fresh and as hearty as ever. Referring to a mutual friend, our conversation turned to religion, a subject which he never shunned, but often and freely introduced. It was so at our last interview, which neither of us could have suspected of being our last. He was led to speak freely of his religious views, showing that the serious impressions of his early days had remained with him. Having observed his mind seemingly imbued with religious feeling — through school and through College, to ripened man, to settled life — it was gratifying to find that the husband, the father, the scientific agriculturist, had preserved the same in the positions of social distinction, and political station which

he occupied. And pleasing indeed is the remembrance derived from the end as from the beginning of our intercourse, of the same simplicity of religious impression, the same freshness and ardor of friendship.

D. Webster King, Esq.

My Dear Sir: — I hope I am not too late in this small contribution to the memory of your loved and honored father. I found your letter on my return home, and beg to be excused for the tardiness of this reply. Yours truly,

Theodore Edson.

The Rev. Charles C. Sewall, now of Medfield, who, for many years, as Pastor of the Church in Danvers, to which Mr. King belonged, had enjoyed the best possible opportunity of knowing him intimately and thoroughly, in a beautiful speech at the festival of the centennial celebration at Danvers, June 16th, 1852, thus bore testimony to his worth.

"There were several marked features, both in the public and private character of Mr. King, which render it a grateful duty to commemorate him as you, Mr. President, have done, and as others have elsewhere done. They also make it an imperative duty to commend his example frequently to the young and aspiring minds in the community, for their regard and imitation. His high sense of honor, leading him always to preserve self respect, and to guard against the slightest cause for just reproach from others; his quiet industry and patient labor — both with the hands and the head — his firmness of purpose and ready obedience to every call of duty; his incorruptible integrity; his generous, and often concealed benevolence; his love for the place of his birth; his interest in the schools and the churches; his endeavors in every way to promote knowledge and virtue in the community; his love of country; his labors and influence in the councils

of the state and the nation; his watchful attention to every measure which might help to secure the glory of the land, and to further the best interests of humanity; all these are well known here. And it cannot too often be repeated to the young, that it was by such a course of life, he raised himself to an eminence which commanded universal esteem and confidence, made him an honor to his native town, and a benefactor to his country."

The Hon. John G. Palfrey, who had previously addressed the company, had said, "I cannot close without paying my tribute of respect to the memory of your late distinguished fellow citizen, the Representative of this District in the Congress of the United States. I knew him well. As colleagues in the Thirtieth Congress, our public duties brought us into daily intercourse. During our most agreeable and intimate frendship, I felt a growing respect for his sound intellect, his warm patriotism, and his reliable judgment. The faithful and conscientious performance of all his duties as a friend, a citizen, and a statesman, justly entitle Mr. King to the name of a christian patriot.

Without enlarging upon his many sterling qualities, which have already been alluded to by several speakers, I cannot better illustrate his entire devotion to public business — which was equalled only by the warm and genial impulses of his heart — than by relating an incident which is still fresh in my recollection.

On the occasion to which I allude, the House had been occupied for several days in the discussion of an important question of public policy. The debate was now drawing to a close, and the House had remained in session during the entire night. Towards morning I approached his seat, and observed that he met my salutation with a

countenance less bland, and a response less cordial than usual. Knowing the deep interest he had felt in the debate, I naturally attributed his unwonted manner to the fatigue we all felt from our protracted sittings. I playfully alluded to these circumstances, and, in reply, he placed in my hands an unsealed letter that lay on his table, requesting me to read it. I did so. It contained the sad intelligence that a beloved daughter was dangerously sick, and lay, it was feared, at the point of death. Perceiving from its date that it must have been in his possession for a considerable time, I inquired why he had not started for his home immediately on receiving it. 'I cannot leave,' said he, 'until the final vote on this question is taken.' The vote was taken that night, and in a few hours he was on his way to Massachusetts; but, ere this, the spirit of his child had departed — his home was desolate — and he arrived barely in time to attend the funeral."

Mr. Sewall, in remarking on this statement, as then made by Mr. Palfrey, expressed himself as follows, in reference to Mr. King.

"So deeply did he cherish the sense of duty to his country and humanity, that he could entirely suppress the emotions of an aching breast, and stifle the utterance of bereaved and wounded affection. Admirable instance of moral firmness, of conscientious adherence to duty, of christian faith and fortitude. Worthy is it to be inscribed in letters of gold, on the walls of the Representative Hall! Worthy is it to be held up for admiration before every public man, and every youth in our land! By them who have seen and known Mr. King in his religious life and character, it will easily be understood from what source such calmness and firmness proceeded. Would to Heaven

they might be more commonly displayed where like manifestations are needed every day."

Of Mr. King's intellectual character, it may be said that it presents a singular problem. His friends never claimed for him the title of a Great Man. It was the last thing he would have claimed for himself, or that would have been suggested by his aspect as he moved among men. But no position was ever found, no crisis ever occurred, too great for him. He filled every high place to which his remarkable fortune called him, easily, effectively, nobly. Living in most excited times, and thrown to the upper plane of political life, when many, deservedly called great men, were in the public view, he attained successes, performed acts, and uttered sentiments that arrested attention, and left an impression, surpassed by few. The following item is extracted from a newspaper, printed soon after Mr. King's death. The enthusiasm of the writer of the lines, was, undoubtedly, excited by hearing one of those fervid and earnest pleas for liberty and human rights, which Mr. King repeatedly uttered on the floor of Congress. The extract from the paper is here given.

GRACE GREENWOOD AND HON. MR. KING.

"The following impromptu lines were addressed to Hon. Daniel P. King, a short time previous to his return from Washington, by the gifted and pleasing 'Grace Greenwood.' They contain a just and handsome compliment expressed in a playful manner. The wish at the close, given at the time, perhaps, when the seeds of his fatal malady were in his system, had a significance and appropriateness, not imagined at the time they were written.

TO MR. KING.

Child of the Republic,
  I have never bowed the knee
To coronets or sceptres,
  To rank or Royalty.
But when a royal nature,
  Crowned with a royal name,
Devotes to holy freedom,
  His genius and his fame —
'Tis then my heart forgets its pride,
  Then to the winds I fling
My democratic scruples,
  And all that sort of thing.
My spirit owns allegiance,
  And prays, 'God save *thee*, King.'"

An explanation of Mr. King's success in public life, is desirable, inasmuch as it will shed light upon a subject in reference to which it is important that correct views should prevail. The class of those who seek to win distinction, in the political field, is great in number. To them it is well to hold up the example now before us. It teaches that the coveted prize is to be won, not by a show of great and dazzling qualities, but by preserving a well balanced mind, and a reliable moral and personal character. The fact that a person of such unobtrusive deportment, without any striking qualities of address, always entirely ready to take his place, and to be reckoned, among common men, and courteously deferring to the claims and pretensions of others, should have been carried upward to the high places of political life, is a phenomenon needing solution. It cannot be disposed of by simply repeating what had got to be a prevalent saying, that he was a "lucky man." In allusion to this expression, as applied to him, on one occasion, with a disposition to disparage him, as not winning his distinction by talent or merit, he remarked, "if to obtain office

without effort, and without the sacrifice of honor or principle, be 'luck,' then have I had my full share."

Towards the solution of the problem it may, in the first instance, be observed that the popular favor, which, so early exhibited, steadfastly adhered to him, was much owing to his absolutely unblemished private life and character—and also to the fact that having enjoyed the best academical and university education, and being in possession of means that would have enabled him to command the pleasures, embellishments, and ease, of a more artistic and stylish mode of life, he continued to the last, to retain the habits, occupations and character, and adhere to the condition, of a common working farmer. It must also be mentioned that he was a man of caution, and excellent judgment, and soon found, for this reason, to be a safe leader and representative of other men. Another qualification possessed by him, in its substance common, indeed with all true men, but in his case, to so high a degree as to constitute an advantage over ordinary competitors, was that spirit of patriotism which seems to hover over fields tilled by the labor that owns them. Descended from a heroic and intelligent race of this description, the child of a population that had given Israel and Rufus Putnam, and a host of others like them, to the defence of the land and its liberties; inheriting from all his progenitors, that inborn, inwrought, instinctive devotion to freedom, and right, and country, which has ever marked a bold yeomanry; preserving its purity; invigorating its vital energies by reading and reflection; and keeping himself, all his life, under its special influence; its inspirations came readily to his lips, and he could unerringly strike this key-note, in any assembly, on any occasion.

During the interims of his public service, he was not often seen beyond the precincts of his homestead, or outside of the sphere of a strictly private life. In the seclusion of his farm he escaped from many of the embarrassments to which public men are exposed. Although largely interested in landed property, often the fruitful source of litigation, he is not remembered as ever being a party to a law suit. His prudence and correctness in business matters, kept him from being involved in speculations or enterprises in which controversies, and consequent animosities, are liable to arise. Living quietly at home, attending to his own business, in his modest and peaceful retreat, he was saved from encountering prejudice, or getting into collision with other men. It is not unlikely that to this, may in part, be attributed his steadfast hold upon the general good will.

Beside and beyond what has been mentioned, there was a certain inflexibility of character, running under all his actions — not indicated by his manners or aspect, for they were mild and complying to a degree, that, to a stranger or casual observer, would preclude the idea of anything obstinate, or even perhaps, forcible, about him — but brought fully to light, whenever a crisis arose, and demonstrated in the even and persistent track of his life.

This trait of character explains his collegiate life. He entered the university in his nineteenth year, having outgrown all boyish propensities, and nearly reached the development of a mature manhood, in his feelings and tastes. Of course he had no disposition to engage in the frivolities, or amusements, to which more youthful associates were inclined. This kept him apart from them. Not taking any interest in the races of academic ambition, he was left behind by those eagerly engaged in them.

Thus thrown out of all college circles of association, he pursued alone, as it were, his chosen course, which was to observe all the regulations of the place, keep clear of all its temptations, preserve the purity and simplicity of his tastes and habits, and store his mind with useful and classic learning. To this line of life, so hard to follow, he held on with steadfastness.

So, also, having chosen agriculture as the vocation of his life, he never thought of changing it. Residences for months upon months, year after year, in the Metropolis of the State, or the Capitol of the Nation — surrounded by the fascinations, pomp, ceremony, and style of official dignity, and all the excitements and elegancies of the highest forms of city life — could not in the least wean him from the occupations and modes of his rural home. Nothing, indeed, could unsettle his mind, or be suffered to divert him from the path of life deliberately chosen.

So it was in politics. He was a whig from conviction. Satisfied that the general policy of that party embraced the best interests of the country, he enrolled himself under its banner, and nothing, for a moment, ever prevailed over his allegiance to it. A political organization came into existence, in his day, destined to spread, under different names from time to time, until it revolutionized the nation, and rooted out the institution of slavery. The men who formed it, fixed and kept their eye upon that one thing, the eradication of slavery. To that they subordinated every other consideration. Henry Clay did not meet their demands, and they gave the country to the democrats, rather than elect him. Robert C. Winthrop could not; and they gave the House of Representatives to the democrats rather that re-elect him to the Speaker's chair. Mr. King held as strong views on the subject of slavery as any anti-slavery man that ever existed; but he

was a whig; and firmness and loyalty, the substratum of his character, made it impossible for him to be anything else — while that party, adhering to its principles, remained in the field — than a whig.

So also in religion. From early manhood he was a member of the congregation and church of the Unitarian Society, in South Danvers, now Peabody. He was an intelligent, sincere, devoted, and constant worshipper and professor of that form of faith. At home, in Washington, or anywhere, he was always found, in reverent communion, at the altar of prayer, or the table of the Lord, with those of that name, however few in number or humble in position, and no one would ever have thought of the possibility of shaking his convictions. They were known to be honest, profound, and earnest, and were respected by all.

In his religious character, as in all his other traits, there was nothing pretentious or specially demonstrative. He sought no outward show of it. He participated in innocent social converse readily and freely, and not infrequently, in a quiet way, indulged in playful pleasantry. Christian principles and sentiments were, however, the interior rules of his constant daily life, in official as well as in humbler spheres. They led him to the steadfast support of religious institutions by his countenance and example, and were so deep rooted, and vital in their strength, that all persons intimate with him, could not fail to recognize them. This is shown in the conviction impressed on the minds of his Congressional fellow-boarders and messmates. The only instance in which, so far as I know, he ever made a declaration of the spirit of piety that pervaded his life, is so peculiar, and marked, that it may not be improper to adduce it in this memoir.

No position more thoroughly tests some of the intellectual and moral faculties than that of a presiding officer in a legislative and political assembly. Parliamentary is as open to the charge of "glorious uncertainty," as any other branch of law. Difficult, complicated, and entangling questions are constantly arising. They cannot be foreseen, and may, at any moment, be sprung upon the Chair. They must be met at the instant, and decided on the spot. The action of a presiding officer, has sometimes to bear the character of being peremptory, and is liable to wound the feelings, and be felt as unjust and oppressive, in the moment of excitement, by those who are curbed or suppressed by it. The position exposes one to give offence. Its relation to political friends and opponents is equally delicate. The manner in which Mr. King conducted himself, in this situation, was much spoken of at the time that he was Speaker of the House. It is true that he had enjoyed the benefit of experience, in the Presidency of the two preceding Senates. But the House is, and particularly that year was, a totally different body, and his position was encompassed with extraordinary perplexities and perils, facing, as he did, an adverse majority on the floor, with all the other departments and branches of the government against him, constantly liable to be embarrassed and ensnared, overruled and overborne by partizan stratagems, prejudices and passions. A house of three hundred and fifty men, so equally divided that all had to be present constantly, on the watch all the while, to gain or to prevent an advantage over each other, and thus kept up to a perpetual fever heat of political animosity, was indeed a difficult body to control. But he held the place with ease, promptitude, and a fairness and ability cordially acknowledged

by all. The following circumstance I am allowed to mention, explains, in part, his success.

Our esteemed fellow-citizen, the Hon. Allen W. Dodge of Hamilton, was a member of the House of 1840, the first year of Mr. King's Presidency of the Senate. They were intimate political and personal friends. In a free unreserved conversation, one evening, in Mr. King's room, Mr. Dodge alluded to the importance of the duties of the presiding office of the Upper Branch of the Legislature, expressing his sense of the responsibleness of the position. In this connection Mr. King stated that he so deeply felt it, that he never left his lodgings to take his place in the State House, without first invoking in prayer, guidance from Above.

This declaration, made to a confidential ear, and perhaps never uttered to another, gives the key to his success in life. It illustrates the conscientious and elevated spirit to which he kept his mind attuned. This gave him courage, wisdom and power, such as no mere intellectual gifts could impart. He who has this lamp to his feet, and light on his path, may securely tread the most intricate and perilous passages of private or public life.

The idea Mr. Winthrop threw out, in his remarks in the House on the death of Mr. King, was fully justified by the public sentiment of the Commonwealth. There was a general conviction that in him were combined the requisite qualifications and elements of strength, as in no other name, to secure success in a state canvass. And it cannot be doubted that, if he had lived, an Essex man would have been Governor of Massachusetts; an event that has not occurred since the century before the last.

Phillips Library
3 6234 00060782 3

FROM THE HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS OF THE ESSEX INSTITUTE.